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The Chrysalid



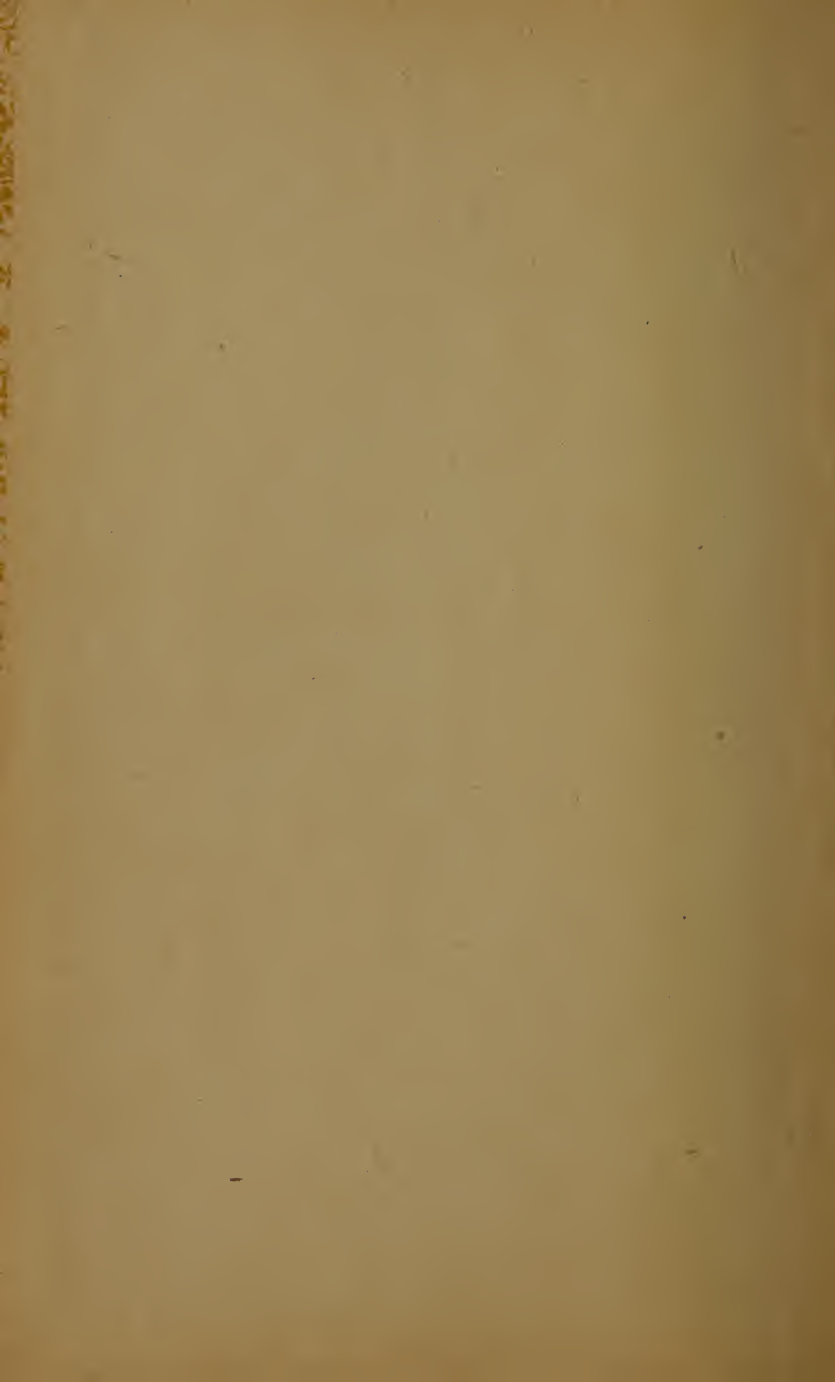
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JESSIE ZANE CARTER



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The Chrysalid



By

JESSIE ZANE CARTER

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TO MY FATHER
SAMUEL MANLEY ZANE



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no 1

The Chrysalid

Tiny, inert, fragile thing, thy being faintly quivers,
To nether, then to higher life doth tend thy little
shivers—

'Tis so I turn, impelled by Life,
And then my thoughts turn back to strife.

Imago, you and I,
We seek to live—and strive to die.

INFINITY.

Infinity about us lies,
The dust is heavy on our eyes
Else we were blinded
By its brilliant skies.

And I saw beauty,
'Tis a most consuming fire.
Fairer than poets vision; 'tis the saints
desire.

PORTULACAE.

I can but think that when these days are done
 I then shall wander with the summer breeze
 And hover o'er thy fairy cups
 That open wide in many-colored seas.

I can but know as stirs the birds soft breast
 To hopes and dreams he hastes to realize
 That I do not a vagrant fancy nurse
 But am an heritor of woods and skies.

Observe, how surely doth the vine reach out
 And find its harbour; else it dies,
 The moonvine and the lowly bean obey their in-
 stinct;
 No less am I sure to wander under moon-beamed
 skies,

To whisper with the moth o'er moon-flower wide,
 To step beside the panther's close-drawn side.

* * * * * *

Portulacae, I do know the whisper in thy rose and
 snow's a guide
 That saith, "Thy path is just,
 Tread on the thorns and also in the dust,
 Press deep into thy heart the bitter pain,—
 Aye, suffer, 'tis thy gain
 That thou art cleansed and purified."
 To be—on hillside in the summer haze of heat:
 Below, a rod below my feet a stream doth ripple,
 fall and beat.

LONGING.

Somewhere the moonbeams glimmer
 With a strange, fantastic light;
 Somewhere the cool seas shimmer,—
 'Tis there I would go tonight.

AFFINITY.

Not by the blundering ties of birth
Can our affinities be found;
Nor Youth's swift passion that endows
The loved one with perfection crowned.
Blindfold to others, yet our sight is clear,
We see Divinity in waving spear;
We wander, lisping wondrous things,
And not an answer from our birth-kin rings.
Halting, but ever rings divine
His message from the earth and pine.

One day you meet a stranger by the way,
Rapt with the vision that has cleared your
way,
"Brother, I know you, and have known you
aye!"

'Tis mystery! 'tis consonance!
'Tis bitter and 'tis sweet.
The love of life is love of death——
'Tis born with the first breath.
For what of man? and what of Gog?
Ay, there you have the meat;
All else is futility, mankind is bitter-sweet
At his best pace.

God wins the race.
Come to Him with this token,
Old creeds are lost—old sins are crossed,
Old boundaries are broken;
And God is Life and God is Love;
Pain, sorrow, fear, are mist—
The cross we meet and cast aside
When we His feet have kissed.

THE GAME OF HEARTS.

Love is a flying, futile thing—
So bitter and so sweet—
We cling to the beauteous little one—
Then gasp at his flying feet.

We give and we take in a cruel way
And reckon not how the heart is to pay.
There is bitter loss at the game of hearts—
And all rules are upset by the lad of darts—
For the best love loses, the fickle wins,
And the lad is off to pierce new skins.

Ay, 'tis a grewsome game, and a coward cries
And a brave man jokes and laughs and lies,
"I am not pained and I am not hit.
This Love, pray, what is the likes of it?
It never was and never will be,
Myself? I will pay it ne'er a fee!"

But it hurts and hurts and the world seems wrong
Where but yesterday was a jolly throng—
And the happiest there was the happy two
Who thought to love the whole world through;
It may have been you, it may have been I
Who jostled an old love as we passed by.
Did we win? Did we lose in the other game?
By now we can measure the other's pain
The bitter tears and the aching heart
Crying so hard for its other part.

No other love it seemed would do—
But ah, let thy heart be ever true—
There is love of love and love of life
And double love is a name for strife—
And Love is but born as soon as he dies
And pain is forever in his eyes
The Sphinx is his mother—
The Phoenix his birth,
This lad is the very scourge of the earth.

THERE IS NO GRIEF.

There is no grief, O! world-worn one
There is no sin or pain;
There is but joy and the love of God
As the sun doth follow the rain.

Pain is illusion, and matter and sense
Are born of the evil one
We cling to the earth and strive for its
 love
When we should follow the Son.

FORENSIC.

Now you and I shall know the pain of years,
Of pale strange fancies and the gush of tears;
Meet moving shadow-shapes and call them men,
Pause for awhile, and then flit on again.

Oh, pain and pleasure, soul and sense
Are winnowed by God's imminence.

MEDITATION.

The slow dust of ages, soft drifting, doth
Encompass all; still forest ways are sown
With dust that quickened beauty's pulse,
Of sages and seers, frail ones—and who is truly
 frail
Or strong? The silence and long time, alone,
Can tell who was brave, and who it was that fell.

THE CALL OF THE HILLS.

Each day is a mood, but the Purpose runs
Under and over, through all;
The hope is unwearied—though slow, sometimes
It is faint, but it hears the call.

'Tis thus that the wild bird knows 'tis time
To lift his wings and fly,—
There's a scent in the air that calls to it
From a far-off, untried sky.

The Purpose runs as the stream flows by
To its level, the moaning sea;
And it ever calls to me, true and sweet,
“ 'Twill soon be time for thee!”

As the bird braves all for this restless call,
As the stream must seek the sea—
As the cloud doth go unresistingly—
I come, my hills, to thee!

They call to me in the wild, dark night
When the wind doth shake the pane;
They call to me by the clear moonlight,
And my heart calls back again.

As the arrow is shot from the sharp-bent bow,
As the sleet that flies in the rain,
As the sand that doth over the desert blow,
I toss and cry in my pain.

For the chain is set, and it chafes so deep,
And the call doth come so loud,—
A message I give to the bird so free,
And one to the sailing cloud.

The call has been clear through each varying year;
The Purpose calleth ever so loud,—

The message is dropped by the high, unseen bird;
Anon, by the fleeting cloud.

And I send blessings back by the winds-messenger
And again by the cold moonlight's space—
For the Purpose doth call and draw me on
To wait there and know my place.

THE PATH OF THE SEER.

"They dance the Dance of Death!" he cried
And the Stranger strode with fearful stride
Weaving his paces out and in
'Mongst famished dancers that did not thin—
For as one dropped out with graying face
A dozen clamor to take his place;
They dipped and bowed, swaying feather and lace,
(*But the Stranger,—they ne'er did see his face*)
Nodding puppets midst diamond's flash—
None, oh none of them knew the splash
Of the fountain's hissing flood
Was fed with the dying dancer's blood.

*"I danced it once but the time was wrong,
Sure now I can dance it, for I am strong.
And the music whirls and Desire beats high;
Come, let us dance it ere we die."*

Then the Stranger strode with fearful mien
'Mongst panting dancers and left the scene;
But wherever he went in temple or mart
The cry of the dancers pierced his heart;
Of a book "Let it be of the Dance!" they cried,
Of music "The Dance wherein I vied."
And the step of matron and maid and sire
Kept time to the Dance of Death and Desire.

SELF-DENIAL.

My little unborn child,—love thee? I love
thee so
That I the joy of thee forego.
I would not call thee from God's breast
To know the hunger and unrest,
And search for the nigh unattainable.
Peace—Love—no fear,
Ah, these things do not linger here.
Like golden apples or the crystal stream
Of Tantalus, we see them, dream
Of their beauty, then a raven cloud of fear
and hate
Seems to blot them out—even at God's gate.
Seeming, just seeming so,—
Ah, yes,—I know,—
But it has seemed so real to be
I do not make thee dream along with me.

THE STARS.

In melody of space the spheres are singing,
Worlds signal worlds with dazzling, flashing light;
Maybe each star for kindred souls is swinging
Its tavern light to guide the wand'rer right.

Then those who wish to play the harp may play it,
Nor trouble those who seek Eternity in dreamless
sleep.

Out there each soul may find its heaven fit;
For virtues sown on earth, at last, a full reward
may reap.

I, I would search for some far, tiny star,
Swinging alone in the immensity of space;
And up the mountains of the air would travel far—
And far, searching each light for my own little
place.

THE VISION.

Red war shall stalk no more adown the land;
Brother shall cry "Peace!" unto his brother;
Reason shall rule where white-hot passion shook
And nations gasped at reeking battlefields,
And women prayed that God might give them
death.

Unhusbanded, unfathered ones—and still
The Christ cried "Peace!" Each glorious teacher
Siddartha, wise one, and the gentle Christ—
To whom man prays ere he his brother slays.

The light e'en now is dawning on the world
When hate will find its banners each one furled.

*Oh, the web spins out from the soulless one
Whence birth and death and red hate run—
God gave them not! and he gave not war!
Up, brothers, rise! 'tis the daybreak star!*

THE SILVER TRUMPET.

Standing upon the little mountain's tip—
It seemed so vastly high,
Impenetrable from the rumpling plain below,—
Prescient of heights to come.

(The Presence calling high and far waked me from
peaceful slumber
And the nightmare played about me as I essayed
To rise and learn the meaning of the silver note.)

Not all the music could I hear,
But notes clear, beauteous as naught before
Came in a silence unborn by air;
Matter was left behind—
And often,—oftener beat the sound of Spirit
That rose above sound.

Sense-testimony was not!
Discredited material things.
And there I stood upon the mountain's tip
And watched the morning rise.

Light stole, and then finger-tips, rose-pointed, o'er
the sky;
And, lo, another peak more beautiful than this I
stood upon
Gleamed 'gainst the dawn and promised yet more
beautiful beyond.

And clearer rose the silver trumpet's swell,
And sweet new notes I heard—
And near at hand there perched a little bird
Trilling the notes that his wee heart had stirred.

Infinity, O, how immense!
Love Immeasurable, Omnipotence.
So, this have I essayed,
Struggling with pen and words of men
To record that which is not of but
for all men.

GOD'S LOVE.

God's love is the world's love
And it tendeth unceasingly;
No more shall we cry, "I will!" or "I would!"
But "Nearer my God to Thee!"
Near to Thee in peace and good,
Not by the bar of death;
Nearer to Thee by the path of Right—
'Tis so that we feel thy breath.

TO NATURE.

(Job 12:7-10)

“But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee,
And the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee,
Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee,
And the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.
Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the
Lord hath wrought this?
In whose hand is the soul of every living thing,
and the breath of all mankind.”

Somewhere, I know, are cool waters—flowing
Rippling streams. Though the City bind and blind
With its dust and glare and heat, with duties
And debts that cannot be denied—somewhere
The fish rise and play at evening's tide
And the last rays of the sun are caught in
Glittering iridescence on their sides.
Somewhere the mink steals to the waterside
For a drink, or to surprise a minnow.
Somewhere it is still, save for Nature's sounds.

To lose one's self in this sacred quiet—
To come to it with the head bowed and hands
Clasped to breast—and there slip into it
All—as the otter slips into stream,
And there, to become a part of the Whole.
To leave the deviation of this busy
Life and seek our Mother—Nature—quietly,
So as to disturb the poise of nothing,
Drawing so close to Nature as to feel
Her very heartbeats,—and sit there seeing,
Hearing, waiting, dreaming. Satisfied

With whatever comes—satisfied if nothing
Comes,—seeking the Cause—waiting the brooding
Whisper that hesitates in the tense air—

Not quite expressed—yet Nature's lips tremble
With the imminence of it, Omniscient,
Prescient, Nature—with dark, glorious,
Fathomless eyes—commands us to silence.

To slip the body as I have in dreams—
Freed the flesh—desiring to mount the air
Was to accomplish it. Playful, unbound
By the corporeal,—rollicking
In the air as the happy zephyrs play—
So have I strayed as if in half-transition.
What if it was not a dream? What if Death
Is but slipping the body and passions—
Th' intensifying our finer senses?

To ride on the wings of the sweeping storm,
Knowing the thunder and moisty odors,
To go brooding through deep, misty caverns
Where the bat hides—to know—knowing not fear,
So,—to sink one's self in the Infinite—
Would be worth the penalty of life.

A something—not more than half-forgotten—
Calls to one from out all Nature. Even
The dusty weeds with their glooms and rustlings,
All whisper—"Dost thou remember? Closer—
Yet closer—draw nearer and thou wilt know."
An ecstatic sense so clear and so pure—
It is so intense, it seems the rending
Of a gossamer veil were but needed
And we would know all—would remember all.

MEMORIES.

A melody that haunts and clings,
Telling of forgotten things
Draws my soul with eagerness

Onward, forward with a stress,—
I have known that strain before
On some far and distant shore.

Oh, that music, how it thrills
With intensity that kills
Past and present, future,—all
But the memory of its thrall;
Sways my soul with raptured pain—
Was it that old day in Spain?
Was it in some forgotten isle
Where my soul did rest awhile?
Was it in isles of Paradise
Where the stately palm trees rise—
Seeming e'en to touch the skies?

Oh, that day! I loved you then!
You were my own, my god—'mongst men!
Centuries may roll and roll,
But the moonlight on my soul
Of that strain will always quiver,—
Happiness at which I shiver.

I knew not then, but it did say
"Love,—be happy for a day!
Man—his heart is cased in clay!
Love is pain, and life—is death!"
Was the mingling in its breath.

Ah, the years, they have been slow,—
Piled deep with frost and snow.
A thousand years might come again—
Happy, happy was I then—
But I aye would know that strain
Swaying with its love and pain.

TO OMAR KHAYYAM.

Omar, here cometh pilgrims to thy shrine;
They come from many lands, they cross the brine.

Poet, you sang because it pleased you well—
Recked not your verses would ring clear a bell

Whose murmurs would sweep 'round beneath
the Bowl
Beating rose-haunted air upon a Soul
That dares to spread its pinions forth and fly
Into the blank mystery of a "Why?"

Content to question, wonder,—not despair;
And never worry o'er the Why or Where.

Our wise men classify each thought and whim
You wondered—and you left the rest to Him:

Vexed not your mind with little Hows and
Whys—
The Whole—you knew—would not tell any lies.
Content to sleep beneath the blooming rose,
Trusting to Him who made its petal'd snows.

Men call you Heathen—you were truly great!
You trusted—and you left the rest to Fate;
The faith of little children you did share,
Contented to not sift each Why and Where.

"Where?" you murmured, "but 'twill all be
well,
"Why?" you questioned, then, "He alone can tell.
"Whence?" What need to puzzle what we can-
not read?
"Whither?"—He knows where he would each one
lead.

I AM I.

I am I!
Nor price nor pageant can ever turn—
Though wavers the master knowledge
Of my self's clear cry—
I am I!

I am I!
When, parrot-like, I hesitate
While one cries "Be like me"—
And wheels about in self-content—
Then may my purpose flee.
I am I!

I am I!
I seek to shed, ay, I will be like thee!—
Monotony on every side—I can but be like me.
I am I!

I am I!
With the wind that blows—
I am I with the sea—
I am I with the driving snows—
I am I—and free!

MINE ENEMY.

Mine enemy!—you are my friend!
My soul strayed from its sphere.
True friendship was the end and aim—
The dream that fanned my ear.

You were my friend while fancy swayed
Your senses—then, the rebound;
Your fickle fancy quickly strayed—
I was not pliant found.

A CHANT.

Make me the prophet of the goldenrod;
Of blue-gemmed asters and of roadside dust;
Of misty purple hills, and sweet cold vain;—
Thy messengers to lead us from our pain.
Oh, Father, take me by the hand and lead
Me to thy dim-lit groves where every tree
Doth grow as best it can, unspoiled by man.
'Neath goodly branches I would sit and dream
Of worlds long past, and worlds that yet will come.
My little brothers of the earth and air
Have each their message if I do but list:
"The Mighty Plan," they whisper each to me,
"Is good, and grows in beauty as we scan.
There are no mazes and no voids; each hath
Its meaning—e'en the lowliest worm is beautiful
When studied by the Master's wondrous plan."
Lonely? Alone with God's good companies?—
A crowd indeed they seem to me.
So, Father, take me by the hand and lead
Thy wondering child to know thy mighty creed.

THE HEART OF THINGS.

The Heart of Things is Eternal Good,
It spelleth peace and rest.
We seek it near and we seek it far
For the ones we love the best.
We delve so deep—e'en to the heart of stars—
To find this puzzle's key,
But baffled ever, though learning much,
Dear Heart, we find not Thee.
Then one sweet day the light gleams clear—
We understand many things—
The Heart of Things is Eternal Good—
Truth holds us 'neath its wings.

PRAIRIE COMRADES.

When the moon swings high and the wind sings low
And sweeps o'er the prairie grass,
Its fingers run through the corn's golden row,
And caress my cheeks as I pass.
Then the ponies' hoofs beat a monotone
As we swing o'er the prairie,—we three alone.

For "God is good" and the prairie is wide
And the spirit of it flows on beside;
It whispers to me when the rain beats down
And drenches each one from foot to crown:
I put on the curtains and fasten the snaps,
To the wind's overture and the thunder-claps;
Then, wrapped in my rain-coat, with sturdy boots,
We swing along as the lightning shoots
Its zig-zags down the blackened sky,
And we sing heigho! My ponies and I.

The ducks are coming; long flocks of geese
Swing on and on, nor seem to cease.
Last night, by the moonlight's silver glow,
They came on and on, o'er the cornfields, low.
Their querulous honk and clatter sped on
'Till it hung o'er us and then was gone.
The moonlight burnished each traveler bright
And their pathway south was a path of light;
Its sheen lit my ponies' creamy sides,
And we swung along at wild, glad strides.

One night before,—'twas but two or three,—
My ponies trotted along with me;
And the moon, almost full, shed its silver glow,
And the sun dropped, blood-red, o'er the prairie,
slow.

Then the moon's silver flood and the sun's red tide
Mingled and lit the prairie wide.

'Twas a chieftain's night and his emblem by right,
Hung just o'er where the sun dropt out of sight;
A cloud war-bonnet of eagle's feathers
Blazoned above us and hung by soft tethers.
Now, this we saw, my ponies and I,—
As we sought for the road while the moon swung
high.

Sometimes an owl springs up at their feet,
Then a startled patter their small hoofs beat.
Oh, the prairie is wide, but a section line
Straightens our tangles by dinner time.
Then on and on o'er the dusty road
They creep along with their tired load;
And down in a draw a wolf sings out
And the air is frosty and I would shout
My comradeship to this lusty scout.

But we turn instead, awake and alert,
At the home road's bend and see the flirt
In the corn, of a coyote's brush
And his eyes gleam out of the corn-row's flush.
He looks but a second and then is gone,
But the ponies see him ere he flees on;
Then into the barn to their corn and hay,
O, ponies! but we've seen sport today!

TWILIGHT IN OKLAHOMA.

Sunset of opal and rose and gold,
White mist, rose-kissed, so fair!
Turquoise and velvet amethyst;
Love hides in your hair.

O, Maiden tall! The white lights shine
And sparkle diamond-wise;
A lover's bliss lies in each kiss
And love laughs in your eyes.

VERSES ON COVER OF OUTDOOR LIFE.

Looking away o'er the barren sands—
A world-old quest is there;
Impassive, mystic,—proud he stands;
Subtle and sad—a lonely pair.
—Forefathers, my gains
Are some drops of your blood in my eager veins.

Centuries many they have rolled by
Since your lone vigil swept the sky
And the hills and the silent plains.

A lonely quest. What is it ye seek
To unfold to your sight
In the golden light?
Silent and far the hills they run—
What wonder is it they worship the sun?
To horizon and sun—and back again;
Mystery boundless,—none may explain
To these lone cliff-dwellers who search and strain
Their eyes at that distant speck.
Is it friend or foe?
Will the coming be for weal or woe?
For answer his eyes they seek the sun—
What will it be when the day is done?

A majesty bred by the silent plain—
Ready for feast or burial strain;
Impassive in life, inspiring in death;
What learn ye, stern watchers?
What is't the sun saith?

THE LAST.

The last leaf on the tree ;
The last day in the year ;
The last page in the book ;—
The last and parting tear.

The last bell as it tolls
The dying year's sad knell
Chimes for the gay young year
A gallant tune as well.

The last white floating cloud
Baring the soft, blue sky ;
The last swift darting bird—
Last from the nest to fly.

The last day—ah, fond heart !
What is that amiss ?
No more to love or hate
Or grieve—oh, think of this !

SONG.

Heartaches and heartbreaks,
Why do you come to me ?
Heartaches and heartbreaks,
Far from you I would flee.

Some there are happy,
Some from care are so free ;
Heartbreakes and heartaches,
Why do you flock to me ?

Heartbreakes and heartahces,
Cause fond lovers to sigh.
Out with you heartaches
And heartbreakes—fly ! fly ! fly !

CASTLES IN THE AIR.

“On the hillside broad and ample
There my fairy palace stands.”
Dreams and hopes the weary mortal,
Tired head and toil-worn hands.

Oh, the waiting and the wishing
For the longed for happy goal—
Tasks so heavy, burdens weary,
Daunt the brave and willing soul.

Bound and weary, gazing, longing,
At the wistful dream in stress,
Hope deferred, renunciation,
Bend and work, for time doth press.

Duties grow apace and bind one
To the weary wheel of strife
Till the longing, tired person
Doubts if 'tis, this simple life.

Trying hard to do his duty,
Helping each his ship bring trim;
Straining eyes far in the gloaming,
No, there is no ship for him.

Heaven, it would just be heaven,
With a cottage and some books;
Far away from strife and turmoil,
In this quietest of nooks.

Wanting, just a hillside cottage,
With some books, and earth to stir,
Lily-bells, and nodding clover
Naught but swallows' wings to whirr.

THE HEIGHTS.

Lonely art thou? Forswear thy goal.
Seek thou flesh-comradship?
A comprehension of thy Soul?
Alas! the heights are rarely trod,
The many seek the fertile sod.
The master-stroke is seldom struck—
The feast of gods is not for ruck.
A Soul-wave quivers o'er the World:
Few rise to it—their banners furled,
Forgotten, cast aside. The wave's passed on
And laps the Heights. The flying swan
May hear it murmur to a Soul
That faints but for its echo's roll.

Lonely art thou? Ne'er seek the Height
Who is not guerdoned up to fight
The Shadows that would kill the Light.
The Sacred Fire can never burn upon
The altar that is unsanctified
By offerings of passions—sins;
To rise as incense; rarefied
By the fierce sacrificial fire.

Lonely art thou? Lone is the quest
For one who seeks the eagle's nest.

THE SPELL.

The spell is over the woodland and the spell is
over me—
It calls with a wild sweet patience that we are one
and free.
The brotherhood of Nature—of waving corn and
grass—
Of blue hills far and misty—of crickets in the
grass.

A PRAYER.

If there be good in what I seek
Give me the merit of thy grace;
If there be good in what I do,
Help me to find my place!

If there be good in what I seek,
Help me to find my way!—
A stranger in a strange, strange land;—
Oh, God, show me the way!

There is a path seems good to me,
And yet ten brambles spring
To fill the place of one I kill
Ere yet 'tis evening.

My highest good doth seem to lie
Along this narrow path;
It seems to lead most straight to Thee—
The glowing aftermath.

“ 'Tis not the way thy Master is!”
All else doth cry aloud.
And yet, something,—my heart? my soul?
To this path seemeth vowed.

If there be good in what I do,
Oh, Father, give me strength to go
Unto the end—my place to fill!
My Father, guide me still!

MY TREES.

Stately and fair my trees arise
From dusky aisles to pierce the skies
And clouds of clear, wind-driven rain
Like white smoke spraying.

A PRAYER.

Oh, thou, the Infinite! Lead, God, my faltering
steps!

Fears clutch my heart, and yet I cry, "Lead Thou
me on!"

The path unfolds before my questioning gaze,
The mists roll back at Thy command,—

Father, the way does seem so dark, hold Thou my
hand!

Oh, thou Most High!

Lead up my groveling thought that clings to dust!

Teach me to scan the sky of pure Infinity,

And be not dazzled by the lesser lights of earth

That call and cry

And goad with darts that pierce the heart.

Beaten and blindfold, but some light I see;

Father, oh, lead me unto Thee!

MY DREAM-HOME.

My dream-home lies within the hills

Whose rocky, wooded sides

Hold whispers of the mighty gods —

Themselves in shadows bide

And council in the golden sun

That spots the forest ways

With arabesques of gold on green,

And pale flowers in the shade.

The tiny stream that ripples down

From out the hill's gaunt side,

Makes music all the livelong day,

And little fish do hide

In the clear, darkling pools that stay

Awhile where fairies bide

To preen their charms,

And then,—fare far away.

SUNDOWN.

Yes, I steer for the port of Sundown
As the ripples rise and fall,
Where the rose and gold is blended
And I hear the wild birds call.

Yea, I sail for the port of Sundown
And my boat lies 'gainst the sky.
As the ebon branch 'fore the sunset
Wherein rose and gold doth vie.

MISSOURI-LAND.

Missouri-land, my mother-land!
None sing of any fairer land.
Thy hills and valleys filled with peace—
Words cannot tell, and pen must cease.

My mother-land, Missouri-land!
The weary wand'rer sees thy band
Of yellow hills, that rise and roll
To meet the skies and greet the soul.

Weary of other lands, Missouri-land,
Home do we come, thou fairest land;
And thank God for Missouri-land.
Home comes thy happy, loving band.

Eager to go, thrice eager to return
To thee, O land of hill and burn;
Of tinkling spring, and mighty river;
Of luscious fruit—thou gentle giver.

Missouri-land! fair mother-land!
Words cannot tell, none understand,
How I love thee, my mother-land!

LONELY.

Night time, alone on the prairie,
And the shadows come and go,—
Night-time, alone on the prairie—
And the wind croons on so slow;
And then it sweeps with insistence—
Ripples and billows and falls—
While the wolf howls off in the distance,
And my heart to your heart calls.

'Tis only a lonesome fancy—
But I pain for you to be near,
'Tis only a foolish fancy—
But I long your voice to hear.
And the wind beats on in the night-time,
And the wind croons on so slow,—
The old wind of the Northland
Bearing down with a burden of snow.

A prairie fire glows in the distance,
A gas well flickers and flares,
A coal in the rusty stove goes red
And the cat just lies and stares.
I sigh, what's the use of sighing?
I would cry,—who would care if I did?
There is pain that is past all dying
When your heart from my heart is hid.

BUTTERFLIES.

Thrilling with joy of the mating,
Celestial, yet sprung from a worm,
Over the grass a-fluttering,
Troop the butterflies a-swarm.

THE SOUL-FLOWER.

The soul-flower blooms upon the height—
To pluck it does not cause its blight;
'Tis unlike an earth-born flower
That withers when its stem is brok'n,
Even for virgin's bower.

It makes renunciation sweet
To pluck the flower few may meet,
And hide it glowing in the breast.
The world may go and take the rest
That wither in a day.

This Spirit-flower but brighter grows,
Radiance from its pure cup flows;
Unearthly light—unearthly bloom—
It leads the martyr through the gloom
Eager at Love's own quest.

It bloomed within Christ's eager soul;
It makes the cross a very goal;
It lights the pathway to the Grail.
Weary we seek it on the trail
That leads unto the heights.

The pathway hard that few may dare—
Precipice, boulder, lightnings flare
Upon the very topmost peak,
Yonder it grows, the flower you seek!
You whom the world calls mad.

My Father, then, I pray! I pray!
For guidance on this Spirit way—
There grows the immortal flower
Whose bloom doth soothe the captive's hour.
Truth is the name of this rare flower.

TO MARY BAKER EDDY.

Hail, Deliverer!

As captives in the chains of sense
We lay condemned to death most vile.
Hast ever thought the temples where
Today we lift our voices high
To thank our God had ne'er been raised
But for her loving thought of us?
"Decay and death!" sad custom cried.

Sensebound and sodden,
Praying to a hard, dumb God
Who ne'er did stay the falling rod—
——— and then you came
And led us through the flame—
Our own red sea of sin and pain and shame.
Of sin, when every good impulse seemed fled,
Of pain that racked us while we bled,
Of death—where would our children cry for bread?

We live! we walk!

You raised us each one from the dead.
We find each day some good to do—
We praise our God because of you.
Tongues that have cried "There is no God!"
Now sing His praises "The living God."

"EACH MAN HIS PRISON MAKES."

—Sir Edwin Arnold.

I built my prison with fond hands
And marveled at its beauty rare;
To me it seemed a Palace grand—
Its turrets piercing heaven's air.

I marveled at its mighty strength—
Could these frail hands build aught so fair?
My Palace and my Heart's Delight!
Let danger come! What need I care?

My Palace strong would hold me safe
From every danger that beset!
I hearkened only to my heart—
The ills of life I would forget.

Oh, Love and Faith were builded in
Each towering, mounting wall;
Here sin and death could enter not—
Sooner the stars would fall!

I reasoned out with happy faith—
Named it the "Palace of My Soul,"
And built an altar in that place—
Ah, hearken! how the sad bells toll!

They ring a sad and funeral dirge!
Alas, I thought 'twas happy chimes,
Alone, those bells would ring,
And never know these hapless rhymes.

I gloried in my castle tall—
The gates I locked tight and secure;
The key—I blessed the happy key
That made all safe and left me sure.

My Prison walls I beat upon
And dash myself in fruitless grief;
Through steely bars my breath comes short—
Alas, and is there no relief?

A Prison built in happy Youth
With Youth's fond faith cementing it—
Somewhere, somehow,—by God's good grace!
There lies the key to open it!

The key! the key! the golden key Christ placed
within my hand.

“Patience and love, humility, child, you will understand.
My cross I bore, your cup drink up,—Love giveth
joy unknown—
No dregs are there, it sweeter grows till bitterness
is flown.”
Rising above the pains of sense and evidence untrue
The prison doors are opened wide, the Christ has
led me through.

MY LADY OF DELIGHT.

I am sure, quite sure, in the long ago
She inspired that man of the brush, Watteau.
She'd a stately way with her flash and go—
And she won many hearts in the long ago.

Her hair was powdered a snowy white,
And her heart was pure as her glance was bright;
Her wit did puzzle full many a knight;—
Poor moths, they were scorched at the candle's
light.

She'd an infinite way that I know cannot die
Tho' 'tis centuries since—but those years are a lie;
For there's the cabinet tall standing close by the
wall—
And here is the fan—and I hear her footfall.

Oh, her heart was true 'neath that pink brocade,
And the artist knew her a winsome maid
In those days of courts with their laughter and
jest;—
And the king stopped his cards to hear her request.
Watteau made her immortal in pink brocade—
And slipped in too by the luck of his trade.

A VALENTINE.

For old times' sake I send you this,
My comrade good and true!
How oft we've fought on battlefields
And made the Indian rue
His love for white men's blood and scalps;
And then gone trooping home
To lure the cookies from the shelf
And on the back steps roam
Again the bloody battlefield
Where we had made the red man yield.

A valentine I send to you
And ask you to be young
Again on this one day—then you
And I scorned such as Love—
We wanted only to be friends;
Let us be friends alway.
Then here's to you for "auld lang syne,"
My childhood chum and friend!
Long may you live, and happy die!
A greeting good I send.

CLEAR CREEK CANYON.

Threading our way through the mountains
From the city's hum we go;
Up through Clear Creek Canyon
To peaks of eternal snow.

The rail has conquered the mountain,
Its fastnesses soon are found:
Man, the Lilliputian,
Climbs the thread to the giant's crown.

We looped the loop at Georgetown—
The grandest loop in the world;

Then on—on—up the mountain—
While below the waters curled;

Curled and beat into feathers,
Beat until cotton it seemed;
Pale green water—I fancy,
Here the water fairies dream.

The trout leaps in the water—
I thought 'twas a water fay;
The wild rose, dwarfed and clustered,
Is clumped along the way.

Miners with pick and shovel
Learn secrets the mountain would keep
While up—far up—above them
The snows in silence sleep.

The pines point up—far upward—
To lakes hid in the clouds;
To the little mountain village,
Silver Plume—in a silver shroud.

Silver plumes—they are all about us—
Cloud ones trailing slow;
The plume-beat spray of Clear Creek
And mountains banked with snow.

A FRAGMENT.

A forest cot on a virgin sod,
Away from man and near to God;
To learn, not teach,
And see,—not reach,—
A flower God made
In the forest shade.

THE WINDS.

The Winds quiver and search—complaining low—
Grey old Fates, that weep and wail:

Bent and haggard—mumbling slow with toothless
jaws

Full many a tale

That makes us quail;

Scandals the centuries have paid

In blood and death, dishonor and raid.

On the edge of the roof they weep and wail

In glee o'er the hapless pitiful tale.

Of human hearts, and sins and pains—

These ghoulis Fates of the winds and rains.

Rising in shrieks of gibber and laugh—

They rock themselves,

And peer in the panes

For another tale to the grizzly staff.

They perch themselves on the window's edge—

And howl and shriek, and hug themselves

With joy at the sin and shame they know.

Honor and love—into none of these delves

These fateful hags as they rock themselves.

THE MIST.

The mist came on like a soft gray rain and hung in
the silent air,

The shocks of kaffir with millioned stems did seem
an encampment there.

All reeked with mist,—on the pumpkin's sides
drops came from the heavy air,

Grew globulous, trembled and slid to the jeweled
weed—

The soft black earth,—and a flower was born most
fair.

THEIR MISSIONS.

Bee and bird and blossom,
Each hath its vision and hour;
The eagle on soaring pinions,
The humming bird o'er the flower.
The bee, asip at the clover,
Hath its mission to flower and hive;
It questions not "Master, or maker?"
For its queen it goes forth to strive.
The blossom gives in its fullness
To bee and to bird on the wing—
To happy little children
And butterflies hovering.
The eagle striketh his quarry
For nestlings on mountain-top;
The humming bird bringeth honey
To babes cradled in fragrant hop.

When the locust sings then Summer is come,—
Deep-eyes, full-bosomed and slow;
She trails with her languorous steps along
And smiles where the poppies grow—
When the locust sings.

The beauty of the locust's thrill lies not in the message it conveys to its mate. I draw not my inspiration from this. There is a spiritual and also adolescent resonance that sums the wholesome material satisfaction in its very highest sense—so high that it leaves us in deepest meditation of the Almighty Spiritual.

'Tis my Gabriel of the insect world. I think there is ever some compelling thing if we but partly give ourselves to its beauty that would lead us to our higher, real selves, and mergement with Reality—God.

This little Gabriel cries to me, "Awake! Awake!" and under it runs this current murmuring "Dream a little first."

THE TALE OF JEWELS.

Diamonds.

A tear of love that's crystalized—
A drop of summer dew
Pierced by a ray of polar light
Oft binds the love of two.

Turquoise.

A bit of Heaven's own fleecy blue,
Plucked from a Summer sky
By rosy cupids, rose entwined,
And dropped by them on high—
The greedy elves then picked it up
And buried it close by.

The Ruby.

Blood from the heart of a murdered queen—
None rivals the ruby in its sheen;
A diamond, until her hearts quick throes
Stained it—and then it shamed the rose.

The Goldstone.

Emblem of gold for which men die—
A gleam from out a tiger's eye;
The gold for which man sells his soul
Shines from thy depth—apregnant whole.

Pearls.

Through quivering seas
The moon rays filtered
And pierced the coral caves;
Giving their luster to the Peaks—
Orient dreams, to bind the brows
Of gleaming, dark-eyed girls.

Garnet and Amber.

Fragrant wines
That took their beauty from the vines
Of which old Omar bravely sung
And gave to earth his benison
Of fragrant, liquid gems.

Sapphires and Emeralds.

The regal sapphire's perfect blue
But makes me think of you—of you.
So clarified and pure it seems
It must have been distilled in dreams
But the fair goddess of the sky,
To rival the queen of emeralds—
Earth's challenge sent on high.

These precious stones are so beset
With human passions they chafe and fret
And long to shine outside their prison's dark confine.

THE NEW YEAR.

'Tis New Year on the prairie,
'Tis New Year in the shack,
'Tis New Year in the cabin,
'Tis New Year on the rack.

'Tis New Year on the sea's white foam,
'Tis New Year in the town,
'Tis New Year in the palace,
'Tis New Year up and down.

To each and every one of you
I cry a glad New Year;
Of hearts and friends and lovers true—
A grand and good New Year!

THE MUTE INTERPRETER.

Winds whisper gently at the close of day,
Or roar triumphant through the weaving trees;
The sky, forbid the sun, is leaden gray,
The wild grape calls its sweets to honey-bees.

The heart of nature whispers tales to me,—
Yet none will listen to the things I hear;
I bear a message from the bird and bee,
From wind-swept heavens, and from sunlight clear.

Strawberries, in the dew-sweet grass,
Call out their message as I pass.
None care to hear the happy song I sing,
Whispered to me by branches' swing.
Glinting sunbeams whisper low
Of the many things they know.

None care to know, and yet I know, can tell—
Dumb must I sit—none care to hear my song,
Filled with the whispers of the wild wind's throng
Beating the branches of the trees along.

“See what I bear on my bosom,” the flooding river
said,
“Hosts of rich provisions, a baby's little bed,—
Sheep and cattle and horses, the pigs within the
sty,
Overlord, landlord and creditor,—the mighty one
am I.
*They promise to pay when the note is due but the
crop goes down in my arms—
Crop and cattle and horses—the labor of tired
arms.*

Man shall harness the power of the river—the
river shall do him good;
Horses and sheep and cattle,—at his call the wild
boar stood.
For God gave man dominion, and man is learning
that power
Is given to him in plenty and not for a little hour.
The factories rise by the river which escaped but
a little while
With the dream of an evil demon along each flood-
ing mile.

Now, listen to me, my children, not the river alone,
must learn;
You and I, yes, each one, must our pride into ser-
vice turn;
Turn it to help each other—our dominion must al-
ways be good.
Else the teacher comes and shows us until it is
understood.

INCANTATION.

Oh, "light that ne'er was seen on land or sea,"
Send thy fair radiance out to me!
Memories from out the caverns of the past—
Rise! ghost-clouds white, and hold me fast!
Fast in thy folds encircle me,
And let me dream of that which used to be:
Of valiant knights on Field of Gold;
Of maidens fair for love grown cold;
Of palfreys decked in crimson trappings,
And stern duennas caught a-napping;
Of cavemen fierce—so long ago—
And cavebear slain by savage blow.
Rise! Rise! ye ghost-clouds, let me in!
I would a little while to dream.

DUTY.

'Tis Duty, fond Duty,
Relentlessly driving
Its wheels o'er the mortals
Who rose up in pride.
'Tis Duty—just Duty,
Sparing not age or beauty—
Its Juggernaut wheels
Tear the heart from the side.

Cold, passionless Duty!
Ah, who may escape it
And hold up his head,
Meet his fellow-man's eye?
Like the wolf that of old
Tore the Spartan lad's vitals—
It gnaws,—and we smile
As we lay down to die.

THE GOD OF ALL THINGS.

Plowing and sowing and reaping, the God of all
Things goes—
He plows and sows in the thunder, he sows and
reaps in the snows.
His purpose is hid when the knife flies, when it
twists in the cut He is there—
(How can mortals guess of His Purpose when they
beg for the weather fair?)

Plowing and sowing and reaping the Master of all
Things goes—
His Purpose is over our weeping—He bridles the
hills and the snows.
He masters the passions of Nations—He holdeth
the gnat in His clasp—
He knoweth all things and their stations—He is
the Lock and the Key and the Hasp.

SWALLOWS.

Swallows in the evening air—
Sun's last ray a-tipping fair
Light, with rose and gold a-glimmer,
Back and forth the swallows shimmer.

Winged shuttle gliding fast
Leads my errant thought at last,
Leads my thought with darting pinion
Up from earth and man's dominion.

Soon will thy airy weaving cease—
Then to my chimney flit in peace;
Thy nestlings there sit all a-quiver
For food from out that airy river.

Down from rose and gold-tipped sky,
Straight as an arrow thou dost fly;
Safe, in the chimney's sooty deep,
There fold thy wings for dreamy sleep.

IN CHILDHOOD.

A little maid in gingham dress,
I roamed the country wide;
There learning God's and Nature's plan—
Close to my father's side.

The rain-washed, cloud-swept sky was mine—
The dark and silent wood—
The baby snake, the little fish—
I knew, and understood.

Learned of their little hopes and fears—
Learned of the pain they felt;
The violet's bloom—the pebble white—
Tales of a thousand years.

Learned that my God and Nature, too,
Were one, and the self-same.

The ground-hog in the dim-lit wood,
He fled as near I came.

The turkey's call—the wild duck's flight—
The swift, and driving rain;

The mocking-bird on hedge did sing
Of love and all its pain.

The red-winged black-bird flashed in light,
'Mongst willows thick, and sedge;

The blue-bird flitted on, its fright
Ne'er made it leave the edge

Of roadside fair, bright and sunlit
After Spring's gentle rain.

The old rail fence its treasures held—
To wander there I'd fain.

THE FOOL'S RHAPSODY.

Players and masks! The thoughts we read
Into these vapid faces,
And play upon our hopes and fears
With thoughts our fancy places!
The grinning mask may hide a fool
Worse than aught the mask discovers.
It palls me overmuch to think
That student's mask may hide a head
'Twould shame the ass for brother.
Minerva's face may be a sad misfit,
Again, well, it may fit her.
And then again, perhaps, my friend,—
A foolish fancy may have bit her.

INDIAN SUMMER.

The setting sun—
And the hills that run
Far into the evening sky;
And the purple haze
Of these perfect days
That lingers when day is by;
The cloud that trails
Like a boat that sails
To the far-off hunting grounds,
Where the Manitou
Will welcome Sioux
And Apache too—
And pale-faces not be found.

Let us steal in that boat—
And with it float
Straight into the far-off blue,
Where the warrior brave,
And his dark-skinned maid
Paddle their lone canoe.

OPHELIA'S LAMENT.

A butterfly is man's desire;
But seek to hold it—and 'tis crushed!
Inert and lifeless, fragile thing,—
Worthless as puff of dust.

Man's constancy—'twas never known!
Save to himself.
With women's hearts the field is strown,
Trampled and wrecked.
Sad playthings of the gods and fates,
A satyr crowns their low estates.

A butterfly is man's desire,
A-seeking here and there,
O'er lilies fair and roses rare
Sweets that but once they bear.

A satyr wanders o'er the field
Agrin at what his quest may yield.
A rose he scatters here and there—
"Ah, lady, you were passing fair!
Your heart you balanced in the test—
Ill-faith, you thought, was but a jest.
You won him. Did you keep him long?"
"He tarried only for a song."

THERE IS NO CHANCE.

There is no Chance! We move as gods or mice.
Ay, take your Destiny, my man, and change it in
a trice.
Argiope-like, we central stand, shaking at every
fear,
Or manly, God-like choose our path, our Destiny
is here.
The Web has many, many paths, intricate cross-
designs
Lead back and forth. A brave man ne'er resigns.
Beaten, he rises strong again, knowing he cannot
fail,
For, lo, the Master's hand is here guiding the foot-
steps frail.
The dust of flesh and sensuous thought smother,
but cannot kill.
A brave man rises in God's might and seeks to do
His will.

A STEP.

I dreamed I dwelt in many marts,
Knew many men and read their hearts,
I bargained and I bought and sold—
Heaped and decreased my stock of gold.
Sometimes a voice did linger near,
Compelling, sweet, unearthly clear—
It breathed "Peace!" when I questioned wild—
In its broad soft flood I was but a child.
Years of pain and toil and grief were swept away
in its sweet relief.

It was not of men—for by men I had sworn—
I knew it was born of a holier morn.
Insistent, compelling, it gave release
And I forward strode in the path of Peace.

And then long years I strode in that other step—
Ay, the bitter part of it lingers yet—
'Twas the vengeance cry against my brother,
"I can not love him, O my Father!"

I had been wronged, and I beat the gate
That barred the path as I hugged my hate.

"Your Brother love! his is a heavy load—
His sin and your anger's goad.
Hatred and bitterness alone
Bar your next step to the throne."

My brother suffered? The thought was new.
I turned in pity to lead him through
The swamp wherein I had almost sunk.
His pain like mine? and I had drunk
Of the waters of Life and denied my brother!
Now, am I shriven, O, my Father!

THE PRICE OF CAIN.

Cain strides triumphant through the world today,
 he rules by slaying Abel,
While Abel, patient, dumb and meek, doth spread
 his brother's table.
The Cain stands high and rules his man—his
 brother of the fable—
Dull, patient Abel prays to God and crowds the ox
 for stable.

Abel doth know and heed his God—he feeleth
 power in Him—
While Cain doth smile and urge him on—close to
 the very rim.
Hunger, injustice, anger's sting—Cain heapeth all
 on him—
Till Abel, strong with God's own strength, doth
 rend him limb from limb.

The patience of the lowly meek, based on the sense
 of right,
Is strong, enduring sting of shame until God bids
 him fight.
His hardened hands, his sinewed back, his knowl-
 edge of God's might
Doth give him many millioned hands that rules
 the battle's height.

For God in time doth sure prevail and lead the
 steadfast on—
The God that Cain doth hold to scorn doth cast
 him from the dawn.
In nightmare of ill-gotten gains he revels in his
 sleep
Till angels cometh with the dawn and rend them
 from his keep.

Anger, injustice, hunger, cold,—ay, beauty from
him taken—

But that he knows and knows and knows, 'twould
seem he were forsaken,

But God speaks out in thunder tones, "This day
have I thee chosen,"

Drives out the Cain with thunder wild—nor lets
him lace his hosen.

Sad, patient brother of the right, thy heritage is
Christ!

Thy crucifixion comes each day, by brother Cain
'tis priced.

He puts the weights on; every one by brother
Cain is laid,

Until the radiance of the dawn doth cause God's
peace be made.

The price of Cain is his brother's blood and the
curse of Cain is his gore,

The earth doth thirst and lick it up as it pours
forth more and more,—

But God is there and He curseth Cain, curseth his
endless greed

And the scales swing back and the price is paid,—
his gain doth his brother feed.

FAITH.

Why should we beat God's ear with this sad prayer
"Thou knowest, God, we've done our utmost
share."

He knows, He knows! Well, let thy clamor cease,
If merit's in you, God will give you lease.

Rather have faith like any little child

Whose tender mother soothes its fancies wild;

Reckon not heaven is this or that! God

knows 'tis well! Then leave the rest to God.

KNITTING.

She is sitting alone and knitting,
While the moments slow pass by.
She is sitting, so still, and knitting—
So fast the needles fly.

“An old, old woman,” I hear you say,
“Bent and toothless, haggard and gray;
Fit occupation for life’s soft close—
A mother of men,—a withered rose.

Time was, she was young and fresh and strong—
Her step was busy all day long.
She baked and brewed, spun linen and wove—
For each and all she bravely strove.

Life at its close in the chimney-seat,
Sheltered and safe, she sits replete—
Crowned with love, her work well done—
Waiting the setting of life’s sun.”

It is not so—she is full of life,
But weary, how weary of the strife—
She tried so hard, and what are her gains?
What has she now for all her pains?

Life looked good to her in the days of youth—
She would prove it so! alas, forsooth!
’Twas proven, the answer, rue.
What had she now with the world to do?

*“Before God and men!” her heart cried sad,
“I proved my creed and found it bad.
I tried for right and reap only ill.
For myself, there is left my heart to kill.*

PREMONITION.

Today as I gazed before me, thinking I know not
what,—

A vision flashed before my eyes, a quiet, restful
spot.

'Twas a pleasant street, trees bowered,—their
arches high above

Held a brooding peace and quiet—a home for the
wood dove.

I knew the trees' stately branches hid elegance
and ease;

I knew brightly gleaming silver mirrored a rich,
dark frieze.

I knew the library held all the books that I loved
best—

Yet my heart was sad and heavy, for a vague and
sad unrest.

Stirred my yearning and wild fancies—the child-
ren of my dreams;

Say was it premonition?—of Fame a tiny gleam?

The fame I have longed and prayed for to buy a
forest stream.

Is this the quip of Life's fancy? More than wild
hills 'twould buy—

Yet my heart is sad and heavy—e'en Fame each
one must buy;

Buy, and find the price o'er heavy—the reckoning
too high.

I'd barter for something simple—and this, then,
come to me?

Grow old with heart's desire thwarted—hear
“Life gives this to thee!”

Is this then Life's stern lesson—“rough hew them
as we may,”

Ever, anon, the answer is gone out from our
hands alway?

DISOWNED.

Down on the bed of the river
The tiny course sways with the large,—
Down on the bed of the river
For lodgment they do not charge.

“Mother,” the small one murmurs
In its restless, uneasy sleep,
“Let us rise and call out to them
From this dark and unpleasant deep.

“Sinless we lived in our lifetimes
Sinless we lie in our sleep,—
Was it wrong to love so fondly?
Was it wrong to seek the deep?

Perhaps he may come to seek us
Swaying down here with the tide—
Weary of life and living
He may take us to his side.”

Little differs the day from the night-time,
A star's ray sometimes pierces the gloom,
The sunlight but causes a twilight
Down in this rocking tomb.

Rocking and swaying and sleeping
With the restless, flowing tide,
The wraith of a love is keeping
Where ships at anchor ride.

THE WORKERS OF THE WORLD.

Grim workers, a-toil at the sky-line,
In rain, in sleet and in snow;
Toiling with pick and shovel,
Helping the city to grow.
Your silhouette on the sky-line
Is as old as the Age of Man;
Your kin builded the Tower of Babel
Ere the centuries began.
Your great sires built for the Pharaohs,
Toiling with rock upon rock;
Their pain saved the fame
Of the Pharaoh's name:—
Their names were reckoned not.

TO THE MADONNA.

O sweet Madonna! Mater mea!
Give me thy grace to bear it all!
High o'er the trump of life's fierce battle,
I hear thy sweet voice, "Hark! A call!"

Thy son—sweet One, fond Intercessor—
Died on the cross, and not in vain;
His pain and love, thy sad, dear patience,
Help my cross to lose all its bane.

O, fair Madonna! gentle Mother!
Thy children call Thee not in vain:
Thy gentle head is ever bending
To hear a mortal's note of pain.

Then straightway to the Son and Father,
Thy gentle footsteps turn in quest—
Well knowing, kind and loving Mother—
Thy Son will answer thy behest.

LITTLE STAR.

Little star! I love you—
All along the way.

Little star! O twinkle—
Lead me to the day.

Little star! I love you
On the stony way.

Little star! O twinkle
While I kneel and pray.

Little star! I love you
Shining in the blue.

Little star! I pray you
Help me to be true.

Little star! I wonder
What the way will be—

Are there many wand'ers
Desolate like me?

Little star! Please twinkle
Lest my courage flee.

Little star! O guide me
Help me to be free!

IN CHILDHOOD.

The woods held a green enchantment
All the Spring and Summer long,
The bright red and gold of Autumn
Carried on the happy song.
The jaybird screamed his joy
From the near-by maple's top,
While a happy girl and boy
Found this just the place to stop.

Here they came to look for blossoms
In the earliest days of Spring,
While the frost still bound the waters
Every morn and evening.
Finding then no flowers to gather,
Digging deep, they'd find the roots
Of violets, ferns, and sweet May-apple
'Neath the thicket's bending shoots.

Wandering happy, gay and free,
Listening to the bird and bee,
Flowing water, rustling leaves,
Reapers binding up the sheaves;
Building houses in the sun,
And the shelter of the trees,
From old March's chilling breeze.
Pebbles marking each small room—

Stones and withered grass for chairs,
Acorn cups for goblets fine—
Filled with an enchanted wine,
From the swiftly flowing streams—
Mesmerized by Youth's young dream;
Waiting for the violet's bloom,
Soon to fill each little room
With purpled carpets fine.

Looking upward to the trees
Soon to bloom and scent the breeze
With pinky pearls of wild crab-apple
Fairest of our native trees.
Going nutting in the Autumn
Through September's warm sweet days,
Scented fine with mint and resin,
Simmered down by August's rays.

THE MAD PRINCESS.

Down in the cool green depths, where the moon-
rays tremble thin,
Down in the cool green sea where the dead do en-
ter in,
There I will hold my court, seated on coral throne,
There I will meet my love and never be alone.
The little fishes will play and glide before me as I
rise,
And strange sea flower will open as I meet my
lover's eyes.
In the coral cave 'neath the cool green waves—
My love and I will walk alone—for our love we
will atone.
Then a long goodbye to earth and sky—goodbye to
the floating cloud—
I go to my love on a coral throne—to my love, and
not a shroud.

SUNSET LAND.

Fair, sunset land, of tender skies, of opalescent
hues!
Bright argosy of myriad dreams, the soul of man
imbues.
The haughty Spanish Don found here a fairer land
than Spain,—
Of golden days and moonlight nights—for his
guitar's refrain.
The Pilgrims dreamed of the golden rays of the
low—setting sun;
They pondered o'er the Western world when day
its course had run.

The Indian legends heard by them were of wealth
manifold.

On bleak New England's shores they stood and
bade the East farewell,
Then turned their gaze unto the West and prayed
their God to tell

Them of this strange and foreign land that it
might use them well,—
While the sun sank in the golden West, whose
mystery none could tell.

The pioneer pushed on, and on, through forest,
stream and sand;
Each danger and privation met,—nearer the prom-
ised land.

Soldiers and statesmen fought their way to this
fair land of gold;
They came in great and grand new ships, they
came in rotten hold.

They came in old and rotting hulks, they came in
"braw" new ships;
The pony rider brought the news on wild and ven-
turous trips.

Fair sunset land! Thy treasures still unfold some-
thing ever new and good;
As when the gallant Fremont saw the sea from the
mountain's snowy hood.

Brave men and true! A hardy race! The flower of
all the world!
Fame's pencil ne'er can number them who saw thy
flag unfurled.
The sun, low-drooping in the west, seemed to sink
into gold—

MOTHERHOOD.

O, little heart! so close to mine!
Beating so warm and true!

Down to the very gates of Death
I go to sue for you.

Soon will I see your little face,
Your tiny, rose-leaf hands,
How the good God has made it so—
A mother understands.

The price for you will soon be paid;
Then—then—my little one,
A mother's love encompass you,
From sun until sun.

My little one, I love you so!
Each day is happiest,
That brings me nearer to the goal,—
Your head upon my breast.

FAITH.

Be brave and true;
Whate'er of life is held for you
Is balanced by God's will,
Waiting your fitness to fulfill.
Man earns his fate
By stern decree at which we rate;
Of no avail—
Justice heeds not when we rail.
Envy not wealth—
Too oft 'tis punishment;
A full-fed pride means not content:—
It grows by that on which it feeds—
Desired wealth for fancied needs.

ONNE YONDER GRASSYE KNOLLE.

Onne yonder grassye knolle
Ye little lambkins lie;
Onne yonder grassye knolle
Ye tree-tops touch ye sky.

Onne yonder grassye knolle
I'd like to dream awhile,
And watch ye birds and clouds
And a far red roof's tile.

Onne yonder grassye knolle
I'd look far down below
And see ye ripples bright
Onne little streams that flow.

Onne yonder grassye knolle
Ye tree-tops touch ye sky;
O'er yonder grassye knolle
Ye birds do dart and fly.

THE GOAL.

Like raven'd hounds that tear their kill and glut
themselves with gore—
Like beastly drunk, besotted ones, who reel and
cry for more;
So 'tis for Fame, Success, all this—and something
more.

'Tis true, and yet condemn not one who sacrifices
all—
Himself a sacrifice, cheered by infinitesimal
Gains—none else would call them gains, the vant-
age is so small.

Each little vanity dies here, each little thought's
 stamped out;
Self-confessor stern, blotting all foreign to the
 goal—Success.
This, this, the world does term success.

Not so! Striving to climb the clouds whose rifts
 a ray has broken—
To pierce the gloom and scan the prize less eager
 ones denied;
Pure, virgin Fame, that justifies the loftiest aim.

“Content you,” cry less eager ones, “This goal
 suits many well.”
The fame-drunk one scarce hears the call. Fame's
 silver trumpets swell—
Let one faint note but pierce his ear, to all else
 'tis the knell.

Fame's altar richest off'rings gain—naught is too
 good for Fame—
Success—those magic words, so much they mean—
 so tame all else.
The hoardings of life lie close—stakes in this
 greatest game.

WHICH IS REAL?

When all is said and done, dear,
When the span of life is run,—
How bitter are our triumphs
That the world counts one by one.

The laurel and the bay wreaths
That they hold for aching brows—
The Nepenthe of these day-dreams,—
How they hold us to our vows.

That we keep calling real,—
Just to smother the dear dreams
That into our hearts will steal.
Ah, me! that our hearts can feel!

Dreams of a perfect beauty
And dreams of a blessed peace
Keep calling from out the silence—
Keep calling—and will not cease.

Kind eyes that are monitors
Look on at my bitter pain,
They look from out the silence
And glow in the driving rain.

* * * *

Which is the dream, and which the real?
Only the hungry heart can feel.
It knows its own—it knows its right
Though thunder rings—and the path is—
Night!

THE GAME OF LIFE.

The Game is a game of Patience and you win when
you think you lose,
And the God of all Things deals the cards—al-
though you think you choose.
You choose a Joy and it's Heartache, your sorrow
bringeth a rose—
Ay, we're plucking, always blindfold—playing the
Game till the close.
For we are a race of Gamblers, cheating ourselves
that we choose—
Drop out of the Game, discard the Pack—another
steps in your shoes.
He's new and thinks he's a winner, he thinks he
can play fast or slow—
We know that at last he's loser—with the pack to
the discard he'll go.

CIRCE.

Flaunting and fair she stood,—
A passion flower swaying
In the wind, fair as a rose
Her gleaming form,
Deep as black depths her sin.
Incense clung about her
And waved from her soft white skin;
A lily bent above her—
Fit chalice for Love's queen—
I ween.

Her eyes in sensuous triumph
Shone 'neath a brow of snows;
She bent the cup of the lily
And laid it 'gainst a rose—
Red rose.

"You want your love?" she murmured,
"You knew that I wove the spell?
And I 'have many lovers'—
Ay, more than I can tell.
Ah, well!"

"Lovers," she laughed, "are plenty,
Plenty as leaves on the tree.
You would 'lead him back to honor'
If I would but set him free?"
Ah's me!

Honor! ay, what is Honor
But a thing to buy and sell?
I gave away my honor,
And so I sure can tell—
Full well,

That the thing you prate of
Is a thing well gone, for then

It cannot be filched by men.
And love—I have many lovers—
Thy love.

Why weep at that?
The rose tree beareth many blooms—
Why weepest thou for thistle-down?
“Happy?” Who’s happy, witless one?
Not you—not I—not any ’neath the sun
We cry for moonbeams, fairies’ gold—
Or happiness.

I had a dream but yester-night—
A grinning skull an apple gnawed,
Holding it firm with fleshless hand.
Greedy it fed upon the fruit!
So Death gnaws Life—
I, with my many lovers, will go down the Way,
You, weeping for the one you could not stay.
You nurse your grief,—I trampled mine—
For who would offer pearls to swine?
Go! take your lover, pulling one,
Your punishment is but begun!

MY BOOK.

I lent a book unto a friend;—
I might have known ’twas friendship’s end.
A year rolled ’round,
And still I found
Its place was bare—
It was not there.

I telephoned to my dear friend,
“My book I want—for it I’ll send.”
My friend grew wroth—
She seemed to froth;
Her opinions she
Poured out to me.

“Your book!—it was not good!” cried she,
“I’ve never read it! From mark ’tis free.
Perhaps you think
I meant to keep
Your tiresome book?
Why in my sleep

The thing, it woke and worried me,
I’ll bring it back and so be free.”
Freed of a friend.
This friendship’s end.
My book—indeed,
You are my friend.

My book is back within its place;
Its golden thoughts none may erase.
They bring me fields
Of sparkling dew,
And meadows sweet
With thyme and rue.

Friendship, you taught,
Is but a bubble
That bursts at the
First breath of trouble.

“JES’ BEFORE CHRISTMAS.”

Jes’ before Christmas I’m as mean as I kin be.
My mother says you couldn’t tell
If I was girl or boy by the different presents that
I want—
An’ the way I kick and yell.

I want a doll, a graphophone,
I want a circus too, I want some Teddy bears—

I sure want more than two.
I want a walking clown, an' then
I want one that can eat.
I want a horse, a Christmas tree,
An' one of those drums that you don't beat.
But, gee! they make a noise like you dumped a load
of coal in the street.
I want a top that spins on a thread,
I want some doll's rubbers too.
I want about a peck of candy an' about a hundred
books.
(I know there ain't no Santa Claus, I told my
mother so.)
I want some toys that jump;
I want a big pink bow.
They all tell me I want the earth, when I only want
one toy-shop.
Everyone is just as mean as they can be an' tells
me to be good.
Now, how can I? I don't believe you would
If you wanted as many dif'rent things,
And then, besides, you knew you'd get just so
many anyhow,—
About a dozen or two.
I've scratched the whole calender out trying to
make Christmas hurry up—
An' then I couldn't tell,—so I wrote "seven more
days."
But now, I think it's only three,—
I'll ask my mother!
Yesterday,—or was it today? She said 'twas
three.
Oh, dear, I'm hungry—I don't know what I want
to eat.
Oh, why don't Christmas hurry up?

THE LITTLE BOAT.

My life is like a little boat
That gaily puts to sea ;
It weathers storm-clouds one and two—
Alas, it wears not three.

It sailed so gaily in the morn
And laughed at tempests' roar ;
At noon—the water it had shipped
Steadied it more and more.

It passed an old and rotting log,
Sodden and thick with slime,
The little boat steered clear of this,—
Perhaps 'tis why I rhyme.

Another storm broke o'er the boat ;
It shivered 'neath the blast,—
The sea swept o'er where it had been—
The log rode safely past.

THE CARDINAL FLOWER.

'Tis a gypsy flower and a gypsy heart wakens to
 it's desire—
Full-blown it flings to the wind a kiss from lips
 on fire.
Scarlet and soft, the wanton lips woo wind and bee
 and bird—
Mute, but the scarlet message is flung to the eyes
 of the thirsty herd.
In a dim retreat doth my lady sit bowered by tree
 and vine—
And none but a lover brave and bold can hold this
 lady fine—

Tribute and toll she takes of all and over the water
 she leans to call
Praise of her beauty—so bright and warm,
As she bends to the beat of the passing storm.

Scarlet and flashing, gem of my heart!
Thou art a flower? perhaps a part—
But the rest, oh, my gypsy queen,
The beat of thy wild heart few have seen,—
So full of impatience, love, haste and desire—
Unsatisfied ever,—thou heart of fire.
Ye're the ghost of a long past Gypsy queen
And her like looks down at you—
 Her heart flames up in each cardinal cup
 That nods to the sky so blue.

She could not stay in the dark brown mold—
For the sky called out to her—
The drip of the rain could the body hold
But the spirit must rise and seek the gold
Of the sun in the dawn's sweet cold—
The sun and the camp fire's train.

Her eyes gleamed gold as a panther's eye
And her lips they gave you your scarlet dye—
I know—for I have been told.

For a Gypsy queen can read your heart—
Thou flower of the streamlet, O scarlet heart!
Panting, impatient and wild, O wild,
Thou spirit of this sad forest child.
Her heart was a vivid, restless thing—
And she felt the lash and she felt the sting
Of passion and wild unfulfilled desire—
The longing that sets a world on fire.
On the dry warm bank you nod and heed,
I lie beside you and cry my need.
Flower of the streamlet, you give and give
The courage to me to know and live.

THE IDOL.

The Idol sat on its jeweled throne,—
Its feet were of unbaked clay—
While roses and incense and women's hearts
Scented the temple so gray.

For its emerald eyes a woman's soul
Had gone to the depths of hell;—
She sold her life, her hope and herself
For each green and gleaming well.

Its scarlet lips were so soft and warm
With the blood of a girl's first-born,—
'Twas a woman-child, and so
Its blood stated the great Idol's scorn.

Its hands were warm with red gleaming coals,
And women's sad trembling hearts
Laid there till but ashes gray and light
Circling high as the curtain parts.

DREAMING.

I have been there in the dream-times,
Treading the paths I would go;
I have heard lily and frost-chimes
In vales I never may know.

Fairy bells ringing so sweetly,
Fairy-folk dancing in glee;
Ghost-lights a-down in the thicket
Beckon, keep calling to me.

Fearing not, I would go find them,
Meet them, and ask why they search?
Demons, or fairies, or goblins?
Dare they to go near a church?

Down in the hollow and thicket
Ghost-lights flit hither and yon;
Down with the snake and the cricket,
They beckon and call me to come.

A TOAST.

Life is a jest! ah, take it so!
'Twill help you on the way.
Life is a jest!—Just murmur that—
'Twill help you in the fray.

None heed our frowns, nor yet our tears;
But when we laugh, ah, then,
Our friends are thick as they were few.
Cheer up! and smile again.

The fool who shakes his Folly's cap
May gain the shining gold
To ease the pain he else must show.
So laugh and jest and hold.

That grief itself lasts not for aye—
It passes like our smiles.
Be brave! cheer up! another cup—
Old grief is gone for miles.



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